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Mental Development in the Child. By W. PREYER. Translated from the German by H. W. BROWN. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1893. (The International Education Series.)

In the year 1880 Professor Preyer delivered a lecture before the Scientific society of Berlin on *Psychogenesis* or the mental development of the human being during the first years of life. This essay was followed in 1881 by a more exhaustive work from the same author's pen on *The Mind of the Child* (*Die Seele des Kindes*, third edition, 1890). By publishing these books Professor Preyer gave to the science of child psychology the impetus which is leading to such good results. Since the appearance of the last named classic, which is based on the most careful and painstaking investigations, the interest in the subject has steadily grown, so that, at present, the literature of infant psychology is quite considerable and valuable. But there is need of still wider interest and of greater effort in this direction. Additions must be made to the body of facts already possessed. That this end may be reached, the persons nearest and dearest to the child must be initiated into the art of scientifically observing the developing human mind. The original of the little book before us, which Professor Brown has rendered accessible to English readers in a fair translation, was written with such an object in view. In order to enable mothers and others to gather psychological facts of child life, the author presents to the general public the more important results already attained, "in a form as easy of assimilation as possible." In selecting from the large material in his possession, he is guided by considerations of practical use and application. Readers are introduced not only to a theoretical study of the infant soul, they are also supplied with valuable suggestions as to the best means of educating the same. Hence the volume cannot fail to be of service to those upon whom devolves the responsibility of training the young. Of course, it requires mental application to master the contents of a book like Professor Preyer's, especially from persons unacquainted with psychology. But the student will find himself amply repaid for his pains.

Professor Preyer begins with the study of the senses of the newborn child, shows the order in which they develop, and points out the need and the means of training them. Then he considers the feelings, emotions, and temperaments. In a chapter devoted to first perceptions and ideas, the genesis of space and time perception is traced, and the difference between a percept and an idea explained. The origin and growth of the will forms the subject of a subsequent chapter, which is full of excellent hints concerning the education of the will. Hereupon the child's first learning is taken up. "Learning to think consists in understanding the simple elements of the sense-impressions," the child gradually

learns to discriminate between ideas, apprehends similarities, classifies. There can be thinking without language, in fact ideas must precede language. On these points the author strongly insists, adducing what seems to me to be conclusive evidence of his position in a chapter entitled "Intellect Without Language and Language Without Intellect." The author also investigates the manner in which the child learns to speak, and cautions against the bad effects of "baby-talk." In another chapter he shows how higher ideas are formed; he demands that the child first learn to understand his own experiences before being burdened with unintelligible concepts. Chapter IX treats of the development of self-consciousness, chapter X of the conditions of mental development. Throughout the entire volume Professor Preyer strongly emphasizes the need of a physiological pedagogy. "The greatest defect, he says, in our European education at the close of the nineteenth century consists in this: that in the first period of the life of the young there is far too little physiological training, and at a later period far too much unphysiological instruction." *e. g.* (p. 40.) "Two fundamental rules are here to be kept in mind by every mother, by every educator of little children, continually; first, to *spare* the organs of sense and the nervous system; second, to *exercise* them." (p. 162.) "Such a (physiological) pedagogy must work, first of all, among countless hereditary tendencies by means of consistent, suitable selection of auditory and visual impressions; then by all ways of regulating the movements, and later the actions, must work in the direction of developing the useful tendencies, those worthy of development, received from innumerable ancestors, as fully and harmoniously as possible; and on the other hand, those tendencies that are harmful, often directly destructive to the child himself and to the society in which he grows up, must from the beginning be hindered in their development, stifled, as it were, in the germ." (p. 168.)

The book contains, also, besides a serviceable analytical table of contents, a preface (pp. v-xiv) by Dr. Harris, the editor of the International Education Series. However interesting this preface may be to students of philosophy, it seems to me to be out of place in a work chiefly intended for laymen. An introduction should in some way assist the reader for whom the book is designed, it must not throw new obstacles in his path.

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